



#### **MARCH 18, 2014**

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## **OVER QUARTER MILLION COLORADANS GAIN HEALTH COVERAGE**

**DENVER, CO** – Between October 1, 2013, and March 17, 2014, over 251,000 Coloradans have signed up or been approved for health coverage – including 100,112 Coloradans purchasing commercial health insurance and 151,050 Coloradans enrolled in Medicaid, according to new data from Connect for Health Colorado and the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing.

There are 13 days left to sign up for commercial health insurance through Connect for Health Colorado. Open enrollment ends March 31. From April 1, Coloradans will not be able to get commercial health insurance, unless they have a qualifying life event, until 2015. Enrollment for Medicaid is year-round.

"Reaching the milestone of over 100,000 Coloradans purchasing commercial health insurance through Connect for Health Colorado is a testament to the shared commitment in Colorado to improving the health of our communities," said Patty Fontneau, CEO of Connect for Health Colorado. "We continue to work alongside our partners to enroll as many Coloradans as we can over the next 13 days and to help them access significant tax credit savings."

"We are pleased to see so many Coloradans enrolled in health insurance, be it public or private insurance coverage," said Sue Birch, executive director, Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing. "Coverage is the first step towards better health, a healthier economy and a healthier Colorado."

#### More ways to get enrollment help

Connect for Health Colorado and partners are offering additional ways for Coloradans to get personalized help with signing up for coverage before the March 31 deadline. Our temporary store is open on the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Mall, 500 16<sup>th</sup> Street behind H&M between Glenarm and Tremont, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily until March 31. A walk-in enrollment office opens today at 8821 East Hampden Avenue, Denver, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. and will be available weekdays until March 31. A walk-in enrollment site opens Wednesday, 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. at HMart grocery store, 5036 West 92<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, Westminster. More information about places to get help without an appointment is available <a href="here">here</a>.

Category	Total	Medicaid	Connect for Health Colorado (commercial health insurance)
Coloradans signed up for health insurance	251,162	151,050	100,112
Customer Accounts		139,315 (from PEAK)	219,021
Daily Website Visitors (average daily)		4,764	6,660

<sup>\*\*</sup> More metrics information about Medicaid is available <a href="here">here</a> and more metrics information about Connect for Health Colorado is available <a href="here">here</a>.

### **Understanding the March 31 Deadline**

The deadline for uninsured Coloradans to enroll in commercial health insurance for 2014 is March 31. After that, uninsured Coloradans cannot get commercial coverage until 2015 unless they have a special circumstance, such as losing a job that provided coverage or moving to the state. The next open enrollment period will be Nov. 15, 2014 to February 15, 2015. Coloradans can apply for Medicaid and Child Health Plan *Plus* at any point during the year. More information is available <a href="here">here</a>.

# Individual Penalty for Not Having Health Insurance May Be Higher Than You Think

The penalty for not having health insurance in 2014 is not as simple as many people think, and probably more than the \$95 minimum under the federal health law. The Tax Policy Center has an ACA Tax Penalty Calculator that can show the penalty amount with just a few clicks. Click here for the calculator.

### **Background**

Through state laws, Connect for Health Colorado was established as a non-profit entity with a Colorado mission. In addition, Colorado has expanded eligibility for Medicaid. Private health insurance purchased through Connect for Health Colorado's competitive marketplace and the expanded eligibility for Medicaid both began taking effect in 2014.

Connect for Health Colorado has been open since October 1, 2013 and operates with separate technology and customer service operations from the federal marketplace, healthcare.gov. Connect for Health Colorado is open to individuals, families and small businesses. Individuals and families can choose from up to 150 private health insurance plans from ten carriers and small employers can create small

group plans from up to 92 health insurance plans provided by six carriers. The Customer Service Center is open from 7 am to 8 pm Mondays through Saturdays at 1-855-PLANS-4-YOU (855-752-6749). More information is available at <a href="https://www.connectforHealthCO.com">www.connectforHealthCO.com</a>.

Colorado Medicaid and the Child Health Plan *Plus* (CHP+) are public insurance programs for low income Coloradans. The Department of Health Care Policy and Financing administers these programs. Coloradans have <u>multiple ways to apply</u> for coverage, Colorado.gov/PEAK is the online application for public assistance programs including medical assistance. For more information visit <u>Colorado.gov/hcpf</u> or visit <u>Colorado.gov/health</u>. The Medicaid Call Center (800-221-3943 for general questions and 800-359-1991 to check application status) are available 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday to Friday.